

Al-Istiqamah

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Issue No.4



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A CONCISE LEGACY

By the noble Shaykh
Muhammad ibn Saalih al-'Uthaymeen

Indeed all praise is for Allaah. We praise Him, we seek His help and we seek forgiveness from Him. And we seek refuge in Allaah from the evils within our own souls and our evil actions. Whomsoever Allaah guides, then none can misguide him; and whomsoever Allaah leaves to stray, then none can guide him aright. Indeed it is Allaah who sent His Messenger Muhammad *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* with the Guidance and the Religion of Truth, and he conveyed this Message, fulfilled his trust, fought *Jibaad* as it should be fought, and he did not die except that he left his Ummah (nation) upon a clear path, its night is like its day, and no one deviates from it except that he is destroyed. And may Allaah extol and send blessings of peace upon His Messenger Muhammad, and upon his Family, his Companions, and those who follow them in goodness. Then to proceed:

On this night, Sunday the 27th of Rabee'ul-Awwal 1417H - which corresponds to the 10th of August 1996CE - I am pleased to have this opportunity to say a few words to you. I hope that Allaah would bless them and that He would also bless our brothers in England; who have travelled from various places in order to here these few words on the telephone, for which they will receive - with the help of Allaah - that promise which has been mentioned by the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* when he said: *"Whosoever treads a path to seek knowledge, then Allaah would make easy for him a path to Paradise."*¹ So I ask from my brothers to accept these *wasaa'yah* (legacies) which I hope would be of benefit to them:-

THE FIRST LEGACY

So I advise you to have the *taqwaa* of Allaah - the Mighty and Majestic - both in private and public. And *taqwaa* means that a person should stand firm upon the obedience of Allaah, doing what Allaah ordered him to do, and abandoning what He prohibited him from, starting with establishing the *Salaah* (Prayer) in their fixed and stated times, and in congregation, for those who are obliged to do so. Along with the five daily Prayers, you should also pray the *rawaatib* (stressed and recommended Prayers) which are connected to the five daily Prayers - and they are four *rak'ahs* before the Dhuhr Prayer and two after it. Two *rak'ahs* after the Maghrib Prayer. Two *rak'ahs* after the 'Ishaa Prayer. And two *rak'ahs* before the Fajr Prayer. The Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: *"There is no Muslim who prays twelve optional rak'ahs from the non-obligatory Prayer every day, except that Allaah will build for him a house in Paradise."*² Likewise, you should pay the *Zakaah*; which is an

the needy. Allaah - the Most High - said to his Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*:

"Take charity from their wealth in order to purify them and to sanctify them by it." [Soorah at-Tawbah 9:103].

The Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said to Mu'aadh ibn Jabal, when he was sending him to Yemen: *"And inform them that Allaah has obligated upon them to give charity from their wealth, to be taken from the rich and given to the poor."*³

Likewise, one should fast in the month of Ramadaan, because Allaah has prescribed it for this Ummah, and one should make the Hajj (Pilgrimage) and the 'Umrah (Lesser Pilgrimage) for whosoever has the ability to do so. These are the pillars of Islaam, after the first pillar which is the *Shahaadatain* (the two testimonies); to testify that none has the right to be worshipped except Allaah, and to testify that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah.

THE SECOND LEGACY

I advise my brothers that they should unify their ranks, and that they should be like a single body seeking to establish the Religion of Allaah, as Allaah - the Most High - said:

"Allaah has ordained for you the same Religion which He ordained to Noah, and that which We revealed to the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, and that which We prescribed to Ibraaheem, Moses and Jesus *'alayhimus-salaam*, saying: That you should establish the Religion by doing that which you were commanded with, and that you should not make any divisions in it." [Soorah ash-Shooraa 42:13].

Thus it becomes very clear that what is required from us - as it was required from the Prophets who were foremost in resolve - is to establish the Religion and not to make any divisions therein. So our Lord - the Mighty and Majestic - ordered us to establish the Religion and not to make any divisions in it. O my brothers! Unite your ranks, and do not differ, since Allaah - the Most High - said:

"And do not dispute with each other, unless you lose courage and your power departs, but be patient. For indeed Allaah is with those who are patient." [Soorah al-Anfaal 8:46].

Do not label each other as being deviant, nor label each other as being sinners. If you see in any of your brothers that which is objectionable, then go to them and debate with them about this, until your word is unified, and thus cause the Ummah to remain united. None of you should try to slander his brother, since this will cause a great deal of enmity and hatred. Likewise, none of you should declare his Muslim brother to be a disbeliever, innovator or a sinner - since this is not from the nature of a Muslim.

THE THIRD LEGACY

I also advise you - O brothers - to do those actions which will be the cause of love and affection to develop between you. Many people do not truly understand the Religion of Islaam. Indeed many people think that the Religion of Islaam includes certain bad traits - even though Islaam in reality objects to them - because some Muslims portray a false image of Islaam. Rather, the Religion of Islaam is a Religion of truthfulness, righteousness and justice. It is a Religion which calls for the reconciling of people. It is also a Religion which wages war against all bad actions and characteristics; such as lying, cheating, deception and transgressing upon others. Allaah - the Most High - said:

"Indeed Allaah enjoins upon you justice, kindness and the giving of good to relatives and near ones, and He prohibits you from all shameful and evil deeds, oppression and transgression. He admonishes you, in order that you may take heed and be reminded. And fulfil the Covenant of Allaah when you have made it, and do not break your oaths after you have confirmed them, and indeed you have appointed Allaah as your Guarantor. Indeed Allaah knows all what you do."

[Soorah an-Nahl 16:90-91].

O my brothers, *da'wab* (calling to Islaam) is to be done by your actions, as you are commanded to do it with your speech. However, *da'wab* through actions will be more effective than *da'wab* which is merely done with speech. So I say again, that those who practice Islaam in a wrong manner, they will create a false understanding of Islaam in people's view. Allaah - the Most High - has said about those who invite to what is correct, but do not practice themselves:

"O you who believe! Why do you say that which you do not do. It is most hateful to Allaah that you say that which you do not do." [Soorah as-Saff 61:2-3].

THE FOURTH LEGACY

I advise you all to safeguard your time and to occupy yourselves in that which is beneficial. You should know that time is more precious than wealth, as Allaah - the Most Blessed, the Most High - said:

"Until when death comes to him, he says: O my Lord! Send me back so that I may then do good in that which I have left behind." [Soorah al-Muminoon 24:99-100].

Time is such that when it departs it does not return, whereas wealth, when it departs, then it is possible to replace it. So time is of the utmost importance. This is why I advise you to safeguard your time, and to occupy yourselves in that which benefits. Keep away from *qeela wa qaal* (gossiping) - that so and so said such and such about this and that person - because the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said in an authentic narration: *"Indeed Allaah hates qeela wa qaal (gossip mongering), asking too many questions, and wasting one's wealth."*⁴ Unfortunately, many of the youths - after returning to

the correct path, and uniting their hearts and unifying their word - have become disunited and fragmented into many factions, and this is due to the whisperings of Shaytaan amongst them and the disuniting of their word. So I advise the brothers to utilise your time in beneficial matters, and to keep away from *qeela wa qaal*. Indeed, time is like a sword; either you strike it, or it will strike you!

THE FIFTH LEGACY

Call to Allaah with mildness, forbearance, and intending to rectify matters - not with harshness, nor intending to cause divisions. This is because Allaah - the Most Perfect - said to His Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*:

"Call mankind to the way prescribed by your Lord, with wisdom, and admonish them with the examples and warnings that Allaah has provided in His Book, and argue with them in a way that is better." [Soorah an-Nahl 16:125].

"By the mercy of Allaah you behaved with gentleness towards them. Had you been severe or harsh-hearted they would have left you and departed. So pass over their faults, and ask Allaah to forgive them, and consult them in the affairs." [Soorah Aali-Imraan 3:159].

Thus, it is obligatory for the Believer to follow the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* in this, and to be mild and forbearing in calling to Allaah - the Most Blessed, the Most High - since it is authentically established from the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa aalibi wa sallam* that he said: *"Indeed Allaah is gentle and loves gentleness, and He gives due to gentleness that which He does not give due to harshness."*⁵

THE SIXTH LEGACY

Strive hard in acquiring knowledge, since that is the reason why you have left your cities and homes, and have left your family and friends. So it is upon you all to strive hard in gaining knowledge, and to study deeply - not merely to take an exam, rather it is for the knowledge itself. So strive hard in seeking knowledge. Finally, I ask Allaah that He enables us to utilise our time in a beneficial way, according to what Allaah - the Most Blessed, the Most High - has made us responsible for.

1. Related by Muslim (no.1888), Abu Hurayrah *radiallaahu 'anhu*.
2. Related by Muslim (no.728), from Ummu Habeebah *radiallaahu 'anhaa*.
3. Related by al-Bukhaaree (no.7372) and Muslim (no.19).
4. Related by Muslim (no.1715), from Abu Hurayrah *radiallaahu 'anhu*.
5. **Saheeh**: Related by Ibn Maajah (no.3688), from Abu Hurayrah. It was authenticated by al-Albaanee in *Sabeehul-Jaami'* (no.1771).

UNITY, GROUPS AND PARTIES

By the noble Shaykhs 'Abdul-'Azeez bin Baaz and Saalih al-Fawzaan al-Fawzaan

SHAYKH 'ABDUL-'AZEEL BIN BAAZ

[Q]: What is the obligation upon the Muslim Scholars with regard to the large number of societies and jamaa'at (groups) in many of the Islaamic lands and elsewhere, and with regard to the differences that exist between them, to the point that each group declares the others to be misguided? Do you not hold that it is fitting to enter into explaining the like of this matter, and to clarify the truth concerning their differences, for fear that these differences will increase and lead to evil consequences for the Muslims?

[A]: "Our Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam made clear to us a single way which is obligatory upon the Muslims to follow and traverse, and that is Allaah's Straight Path and the manhaj (methodology) of His upright Religion. Allaah - the Most High - said: **"And this is My Straight Path, so follow it and do not follow other paths that will separate you from His Path. This has He ordained for you, that you may become pious."** [Soorah al-An'aam 6:153]. Just as the Lord of Might and Majesty warned the Ummah (nation) of Muhammad sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam against splitting and disunity, since that is one of the greatest causes of failure and of the enemy taking control, as occurs in Allaah - the Majestic's - saying: **"And hold fast altogether to the rope of Allaah and do not be divided."** [Soorah Aal-'Imraan 3:101]. And His - the Most High's - saying: **"He has ordained for you the same religion which He ordained for Nuh, and that which We revealed to you, and that which We ordained for Ibraaheem, Moosaa and 'Eesaa 'alayhimus-salaam, saying: that you should establish the Religion by doing that which you are ordered with, and make no divisions in it. Intolerable for the Pagans is that to which you call them."** [Soorah ash-Shooraa 42:13]. So this is a Divine call to unity and for hearts to be harmonised. And in any Islaamic land, if there are many groups for the purpose of good, aid, co-operating in righteousness and piety between the Muslims - without their being differences between the desires of their companions and followers - then this is good, is a blessing, and produces great benefit.

However, if each of them declare the others to be misguided and attack their actions, then this harm is very great and its evil consequences very serious. Then what is obligatory upon the Muslims is to clarify the true state of affairs and to discuss with each group and to sincerely advise all of them that they should proceed upon the way laid down by Allaah for His servants, and upon that which our Prophet Muhammad sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam called to. Then those who ignore this, or continue in their stubbornness, due to personal benefit or goal - known only to Allaah - then what is obligatory upon those who know the reality is to make this known about them and to warn against them, so that the people may avoid their path, and that those who do not know the reality of their affair may not fall into it and be led astray, and that they are not turned away from the Straight Path that Allaah ordered us

to follow, as occurs in His - the Mighty and Majestic's - saying: **"And this is My Straight Path, so follow it and do not follow other paths that will separate you from His Path. This has He ordained for you, that you may become pious."**

[Soorah al-An'aam 6:153]. And from that which there is no doubt about is that the multitude of sects and groups in the Islaamic society is, firstly something desired by Shaytaan, and secondly something desired by the enemies of Islaam from amongst mankind. Since agreement and unification of the Muslims, and their being aware of the dangers which threaten them and their 'aqeedah (beliefs), will make them active in refuting and rebutting it, and acting in a unified manner for the benefit of the Muslims - thus repelling the danger from their Religion, their lands and their brothers. And this is something which the enemies - from amongst mankind and jinn - are not pleased with. Therefore they are very eager to split-up the Muslims, destroy their unity and to sow the seeds of enmity and discord between them. We ask Allaah that He unites the Muslims upon the truth and that He removes from their society every type of misguidance and every cause of discord. Indeed He is the One Who is able to do that, and He is the One having full power over it."¹

[Q]: ... and the students of knowledge refer back to you and to the other major Scholars and ask them. So what do you advise them? Do you advise and approve of entering (i.e. joining) the likes of these groups; such as Jamaa'atul-Ikhwaan, Jamaa'atul-Tableegh, Jamaa'atul-Jihaad, and so on, or do you advise them to remain upon seeking knowledge with the students of knowledge from those who call to the way of the Salaf (the Pious Predecessors)?

[A]: "All praise is for Allaah and may Allaah extol and send blessings of peace upon His Prophet. We advise them all to unite upon a single way and that is the way of seeking knowledge and attaining understanding of the Book and the Sunnah, and to proceed along the manhaj (methodology) of Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah. I advise them all that their goal should be to follow the Book and the Sunnah and to proceed upon the manhaj of Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah, and that they should all call themselves Ahlus-Sunnah or the followers of the Salafus-Saalihi (Pious Predecessors). But as for tahazzub (bigotted partisanship) for the Ikhwaanul-Muslimeen, or Jamaa'atul-Tableegh, or other groups, then I do not advise that. That is a mistake. Rather we advise them that they should be together upon a single way, a single jamaa'ah, advising one another with the truth and having allegiance to Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah. This is the correct way to prevent differences. But if there are various groups upon that same way (following the Salafus-Saalihi) - a group in one place, and another in a different place - but all of them are upon the Salafee² way, following the Book and the Sunnah, calling to Allaah and having allegiance to Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah - without tahazzub (partisanship) and without ta'assub (bigotted blind-following), then that is not harmful - even if there are a number of groups - as long as their way and their goal is one."³

SHAYKH SAALIH AL-FAWZAAN

[Q]: O noble Shaykh, with regards to the serious state in which the Ummah of Islaam lives - a state of confusion in peoples' thoughts - particularly in matters relating to the Religion. For the Islaamic jamaa'ahs (groups) and sects have become many, and each of them claim that their manhaj (methodology) is the correct Islaamic methodology which must be followed. So the Muslim is left in a state of confusion as to what he should follow and which one is upon the truth.

[A]: "Splitting up is not from the Religion, since the Religion commands us with unity and that we should be a single Jamaa'ah and a single Ummah upon the 'aqeedah (belief) of Tawheed (i.e. to single out Allaah alone for worship) and upon following the Messenger sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam. Allaah - the Most High - said: **"Indeed this Ummah of yours is a single Ummah and I am your Lord, so worship Me alone."** [Soorah al-Anbiyaa 21:92]. And Allaah - the Most High - said: **"And hold fast altogether to the rope of Allaah and do not become divided."** [Soorah Aal-'Imraan 3:103]. And Allaah - the Most Perfect - said: **"Indeed those who split-up their Religion and become sects, you have no part with them in the least. Their affair is with Allaah who will tell them what they used to do."** [Soorah al-An'aam 6:159]. So this contains a severe warning against splitting and differing. Allaah - the Most High - said: **"And do not be like those who split-up and differed after the clear evidences came to them. For them is a tremendous punishment."** [Soorah Aal-'Imraan 3:105].

So our Religion is the Religion of al-Jamaa'ah, and the Religion of agreement and unity. Splitting is not from the Religion, since the Religion orders that we should be a single Jamaa'ah and the Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam said: "The Believer to the Believer is like a building, one part supporting the other."⁴ And he sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam also said: "The example of the Believers with respect to their mutual love, mercy and affection is like the example of a single body."⁵ And it is known that a building and a body are a single cohesive thing, not disunited and fragmented - since if a building splits then it will collapse; and likewise a body, if it splits, then life will be lost. Thus, there must be a unity and we must be a single Jamaa'ah whose foundation is Tawheed and whose methodology is the da'wah (call) of the Messenger sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam; and which proceeds upon the Religion of Islaam. Allaah - the Most High - said: **"And this is My Straight Path, so follow it, and do not follow other paths that will separate you from His Path."** [Soorah al-An'aam 6:153]. So these groups, and this splitting which is present today, is not approved of by Islaam. Rather, Islaam forbids it severely and commands uniting upon the 'aqeedah (belief) of Tawheed and upon the methodology of Islaam, a single Jamaa'ah and a single Ummah, just as our Lord - the Most Perfect, the Most High - ordered. And splitting and there being many (differing) groups and parties is from the plots of the devils - from the jinn and mankind - against this Ummah. So the kuffaar (disbelievers) and the munaafiqs (hypocrites) have never ceased, since olden times, introducing their poison in order to split the Ummah. The jews said previously: **"And a party of the People of the Book say: Believe in the morning in that which is revealed to the Muslims, but reject it at the end of the day, so they may turn back."** [Soorah Aal-'Imraan 3:72]. Meaning: that the Muslims will leave their religion when they see you leaving it. And the Hypocrites said: **"Do not spend on those who are with**

Allaah's Messenger until they desert him." [Soorah al-Munaafiqoon 63:7]. **"And as for those who erect a mosque by way of disbelief and seeking to harm and disunite the Believers."** [Soorah at-Tawbah 9:107].⁶

[Q]: What is the ruling with regards to those who align themselves with those jamaa'ahs, particularly those that are established upon secrecy and giving bay'ah (pledge of allegiance to the party leader)?

[A]: "The Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam informed us that splitting would occur and he ordered us, at that particular time, to come together and to be upon that which the Messenger sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam and his Companions were upon. So he sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam said: "The jews split-up into seventy-one sects and my Ummah would split-up into seventy-three sects. All of them are in the Fire except one." They said: Who is it, O Messenger of Allaah? So he replied: "That which I and my Companions are upon this day."⁷ And he sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam said, when his Companions asked him to advise them: "I advise you to have taqwaa (fear and obedience) of Allaah and to hear and to obey, even if an Abyssinian slave is a leader over you. And those of you who live long after me will see many differences of opinion. So hold fast to my Sunnah and the guidance of the Rightly-Guided Khaleefahs (Successors) after me; cling to it tightly ..."⁸ So this is the manhaj (methodology) which is obligatory for all the Muslims to follow, until the Day of Resurrection. So when disagreements occur then they must return back to that which the Salaf (the Pious Predecessors) of this Ummah were upon, with regards to manhaj, bay'ah (pledge of allegiance), and other matters connected to the Religion."⁹

1. Majmoo' Fataawaa wa Maqaalaat Mutanawwi'ah (5/202-204).

2. Imaam as-Sam'aanee (d.562H) said in al-Insaab (3/273): **"As-Salafee: this is an ascription to the Salaf and following their ways, in that which is related from them."** Ibn al-Atheer (d.630H) said in al-Lubaab fee Tahdheebil-Insaab (2/162), commenting upon the previous saying of as-Sam'aanee: **"And a group were known by this ascription."** So the meaning of this is that the term Salafee, and its ascription to them was a matter known in the time of Imaam as-Sam'aanee - the sixth century - or before him. Thus, the term Salafee is not a term that has been recently invented, as some have mistakenly claimed! Rather, it is an ascription to the Salaf (Pious Predecessors) and following their way.

3. From a series of taped questions asked by Shaykh Abul-Hasan al-Misree in the house of the noble Shaykh 'Abdul-'Azeer bin Baaz - hafidhahullaah - on the 6th day of Dhul-Hijjah 1416H (equivalent to the 24th of April 1996CE).

4. Related by al-Bukhaaree (no.481) and Muslim (no.2585), from Abu Hurayrah radiiallaahu 'anhu.

5. Related by al-Bukhaaree (no.6011) and Muslim (no.2586), from an-Nu'maan ibn Basheer radiiallaahu 'anhu.

6. From a series of questions put to the noble Shaykh - hafidhahullaah - between the 13th and 15th day of Dhul-Hijjah, in the year 1413H. The questions have been reproduced from the book: Maraaji'aat fi Fiqhil-Waaqi' (pp.44-45).

7. Hasan: Related by at-Tirmidhee (no.2792) and al-Haakim (1/128-129), from 'Abdullaah ibn 'Amr radiiallaahu 'anhu. It was authenticated by Shaykh al-Albaanee in as-Saheehah (no.204).

8. Saheeh: Related by Ahmad (4/126) and Abu Daawood (no.4607), from al-'Irbaad ibn Saariyah radiiallaahu 'anhu. It was authenticated by al-Haafidh Ibn Hajr in Takhreej Ahaadeeth Mukhtasar Ibnul-Haajib (1/137).

9. Maraaji'aat fi Fiqhil-Waaqi' (pp.46-47).

Fleeing From FITNAH

Shaykh Muhammad al-Hamood¹

"All praise is for Allaah who, in every age and intervals between the Prophets, raises up a group from the People of Knowledge, who call the misguided to guidance and patiently bearing ill-treatment and harm. With the Book of Allaah they give life to the dead, and by Allaah's Light they give sight to the blind. How many a person killed by *Iblees* have they revived. How many people astray and wandering have they guided. How beautiful their effect has been upon the people, and how vile people have been towards them. They expel from the Book of Allaah the alterations of those going beyond bounds, the false claims of the liars and the false interpretations of the ignorant-ones - those who uphold the banner of innovation and who unleash *fitnah* (trial and discord), who differ about the Book, oppose the Book and agree to oppose the Book. Those who speak about Allaah and His Book without knowledge, and who argue about what is ambiguous in the Book, and deceive the ignorant with such ambiguities. So we seek refuge in Allaah from the *fitnabs* (trials and discord) of the misguided-ones."² And I bear witness that none has the right to be worshipped except Allaah, alone, having no partner and that Muhammad *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* is His trustworthy Slave and Messenger. And may Allaah extol and send His blessings of peace upon him, his Family and his Companions.

To proceed:

FORBIDDANCE OF BEING HASTY AND IMPATIENT

From the very nature of *fitnah* (trial and discord) is that matters become confused, mistakes increase, and minds and intellects begin to swerve. Protection and safety from this - in such times - lies in the *Jamaa'ah*; at the head of which are the Scholars. So it is obligatory upon the people - those leading and those being led - to take hold of the sayings of the Scholars and to act upon them. Since the general masses being pre-occupied with issues of *fitnah*, wherein they begin to express their own opinions, only leads to an increase in the *fitnah* and further splits the Ummah. So the *umoorul-'aammah* (affairs pertaining to public benefit and welfare) - from the matters related to peace, security and fear - should be referred back to those who possess sound knowledge and understanding, as Allaah - the Most High - has said:

"When there comes to them some matter related to public welfare of security or fear, they make it known amongst the people. If only they had referred it back

to the Messenger *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, or to those in authority amongst them, then the proper people would have investigated and evaluated the matter from them. Were it not for the Grace and Mercy of Allaah upon you, you would have indeed followed Shaytaan - except for a few of you." [Soorah an-Nisaa 4:83].

Imaam as-Sa'dee (d.1376H) - *rabimabullaah* - said:

"This is the disciplinary admonition from Allaah to His Servants with regards to their unbefitting action. And that it is a must for them, that when there comes to them some news concerning important issues - such as issues connected to public welfare and safety of the Believers, or those that are related to breach of security, or fear of a calamity befalling them - that they should first verify such news and not be hasty in spreading it. Rather, they should refer such issues back to the Messenger *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, and to the people in authority; those who possess knowledge, understanding, sound advice, intellect, maturity and composure; those who understand the affairs and have knowledge of the associated benefits and harms. If they see that in broadcasting it there is a benefit and a cause of happiness for the Believers, and a means of protection from their enemies, then they should do so. But if they see that there is no benefit in it, or that there is some benefit but the harm in it is greater, then they should not do so. This is why Allaah said: **"Then the proper people would have investigated and evaluated the matter from them."** Meaning: That they would evaluate it with their sound understanding and their firm and correct knowledge. So in this is an evidence for an important principle which is: If there arises a need to investigate a particular issue, then it is obligatory that it is left to those who are qualified for it, and no one should precede them in this - and this is closer to what is correct, and safer from error. And in this also is a prohibition of being hasty and impatient in spreading the news as soon as they hear it. Likewise there is a command to reflect and consider before speaking, so he looks into it to see if there is a benefit in doing so, if so he embarks upon it, and if not, he abstains from it."³

THE SCHOLARS AND THE AFFAIRS OF THE UMMAH

In issues of *fitnah* and other detailed issues, and issues connected to matters of public welfare of the Ummah - such as affairs related to

siyaasatush-shar'iiyyah (politics of the Sharee'ah), and the widespread evils, and their like - people are in need of having sound knowledge and understanding of the *maslabah* and *mafsadah* (related benefits and harms). Since these issues, most of the time, are the cause for *fitnabs* to occur, and they are not like the issues related to purification, Prayer, Hajj and their like; which is possible for a young student of knowledge - or in some cases, even the layman - to speak about, and to prefer one saying over another. And this is because: "Understanding the objectives and goals of the *Sharee'ah* (Islamic Law) is not possible, except by thoroughly studying the texts and studying the detailed workings of the *Sharee'ah*. Since *fiqhul-maqaasid* (the science of understanding the objectives and goals of the *Sharee'ah*) is indeed a great and mighty science which cannot be gained by just anyone. Rather, it can only be gained by one who has reached a high level of knowledge, has examined the state of affairs and is well acquainted with them, and who has looked into the various possible outcomes that may occur. And weighing between the benefits and harms is dependent upon understanding the *Sharee'ah* and its objectives, and having understanding of the state of affairs, and the various degrees of benefits and harms. So none of this is possible, except for the Scholars."⁴

Imaam an-Nawawee (d.676H) - *rahimabullaah* - said:

"The one ordering the good or forbidding the evil must be knowledgeable about what is being ordered or prohibited. And the level of knowledge required for this will vary in accordance with what is being ordered or prohibited. Thus, if it is an issue concerning clear-cut obligations and well known prohibitions - such as Prayer, Fasting, fornication or drinking intoxicants - then every Muslim is a Scholar with regards to such issues. **However, if the issue involves detailed matters, or matters connected to *ijtihad* (the Science of extracting rulings from the Revelation), then the general body of Muslims cannot enter into it, nor is it for them to order or prohibit. Rather, this is only for the Scholars.**"⁵

And the subjects that we have mentioned (i.e. that which is related to affairs of public benefit and interest of the Ummah; such as matters connected to *Sharee'ah* politics, weighing the affairs, correcting the widespread evil, *takfeer* (declaring Muslims to be unbelievers) and rebelling against the rulers) are from the most important subjects which have touched the Islamic awakening in these days, and about which there is plenty of discussion, controversy and argumentation between those Muslim youths who are firm in clinging to the Religion and who earnestly desire good. So these subjects are of an extremely important nature, and likewise, deviating from the correct path with regards to them is extremely dangerous!

Due to this, I wanted to gather some of the statements from our noble contemporary Scholars on this subject - may Allaah protect them and look after them, and continue making them of benefit to the Ummah for the remainder of their time - those who are the Scholars of the Religion and the inheritors of the Prophets, those who concentrated on understanding the formulating principles

regarding the *balaal* (lawful) and the *baraam* (prohibited). Shaykhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) - *rahimabullaah* - said: "And whosoever from this Ummah, is known for having truthfulness, whereby he has been praised and commended by the majority of the various groups of people from this Ummah, then those are the leaders of guidance and the beacons in the darkness."⁶

So they are the *Rabbaanee* Scholars;⁷ those who teach the people the Book and the wisdom, and who cultivate the people upon it. And they are the people of deep understanding and wisdom, whom Allaah commanded us to ask, by His saying:

"Ask the People of Knowledge if you do not know."

[Soorah al-Anbiyaa 21:30].

So returning to them, being around them, and asking them, is the way out from the *fitnabs* - as we have previously explained - especially when there are a great number of differences and a great number of people differing, and many differing paths ahead of the traveller.

CLINGING TO THE JAMAA'AH

The Scholars are the leaders of the *Jamaa'ah* that we have been commanded to cling to; and which we have been warned against separating from - as occurs in the hadeeth of 'Abdullaah ibn Mas'ood *radiallaahu 'anhu* who related that Allaah's Messenger *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "*The blood of a Muslim who testifies that none has the right to be worshipped, except Allaah; and that I am the Messenger of Allaah, is not lawful, except in one of three cases: the one who commits adultery, a life for a life, or the one who abandons his Religion and splits from the Jamaa'ah.*"⁸

'Umar ibn al-Khattaab *radiallaahu 'anhu* relates that Allaah's Messenger *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "*Cling to the Jamaa'ah and beware against splitting! For indeed Shaytaan is with the individual person but is further away from two people. And whosoever desires the centre of Paradise, then let him cling to the Jamaa'ah. And whosoever is pleased by his good deeds and saddened by his bad deeds, then he is a Believer.*"⁹

Thus, whosoever clings to the *Jamaa'ah* - not separating from it - will be the successful one. But whosoever splits from the *Jamaa'ah* and is amazed with his own opinion and knowledge, and the large number who follow him - then he is the one who is destroyed.

Imaam Abu Bakr al-Aajurree (d.360H), after recording various *Aayaat* (verses) and *ahaadeeth* that order clinging to the *Jamaa'ah*, then said: "The sign for whosoever Allaah - the Mighty and Majestic - intends goodness for, is that he traverses this path: Clinging to the Book of Allaah the Mighty and Majestic, to the *Sunnah* of Allaah's Messenger *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, and to the path of his Companions *radiallaahu 'anhum*; and all those who followed them in correctness and goodness, may Allaah have mercy upon them all;

and also to what the Scholars of the Muslims were upon in the various lands - such as al-Awzaa'ee (d.157H), Sufyaan ath-Thawree (d.164H), Maalik ibn Anas (d.179H), ash-Shaafi'ee (d.204H), Ahmad bin Hanbal (d.241H), al-Qaasim ibn Salaam (d.235H), and all those who were upon a path similar to theirs, avoiding taking any path which those Scholars did not take."¹⁰

1. Taken from *Al-Furqaan* magazine (no.61/ pp.44-46)
2. *Ar-Radd 'alal-Jahmiyyah wa-Zanaadiqab* (p.2) of Imaam Ahmad bin Hanbal.
3. *Tayseerul-Kareemur-Rahmaan* (2/54-55). Refer also to *Qawaa'id fee Ta'aamul ma'il-'Ulemaa* (p.121).

4. *Qawaa'id fee Ta'aamul ma'il-'Ulemaa* (p.119) of Shaykh 'Abdur-Rahmaan al-Luwayhiq.
5. *Sbarh Saabeeh Muslim* (2/23).
6. *Majmoo'ul-Fataawaa* (11/43).
7. The *Rabbaanee* Scholar is the one possessing deep knowledge and who acts according to his knowledge and teaches it to others in accordance with their level. Refer to *Fatbul-Baaree* (1/214) of Al-Haafidh Ibn Hajr.
8. Related by al-Bukhaaree (9/6) and Muslim (3/1302).
9. **Saheeh:** Related by Ahmad (1/18) and at-Tirmidhee (no.2254). It was authenticated by al-Albaanee in *Dbilaalul-Jannab* (no.87).
10. *Asb-Sharee'ah* (no.14) of Imaam al-Aajurree.

ISLAAMIC PRINCIPLES #1

THE PRINCIPLE OF PERMISSIBILITY

"The principle regarding acts of worship is one of prohibition, except if the *Sharee'ah* (Divinely Prescribed Law) relates a prescription for it. And the principle regarding customary behaviour is permissibility, except when the *Sharee'ah* relates a prohibition for it." (*Al-aslu fil-'ibaadaat al-badbru illaa ma waradab 'anish-shar'ee tashree'ahu. Wal-aslu fil-'aadaat al-ibaabah illaa ma waradab 'anish-shar'ee tabreemahu*).¹

The above principle is an important principles that Islaam teaches. Thus, with regards to matters of 'aadaat (day-to-day actions), such as eating, drinking and wearing clothes, then everything is allowed in this regard, except if there is a clear and authentic evidence restricting or prohibiting its allowance. However, when it comes to 'ibaadaat (acts of worship), then the opposite is the case. Here, nothing can be established as an act of worship, except if there is a clear and authentic text to allow it. So the basic principle for 'aadaat is ibaahah (permissibility), whereas the basic principle for 'ibaadaat is tahreem (prohibition).

Shaykhul-Islaam Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) - rahimahullaah - said:
 "Peoples' sayings and actions are of two kinds: 'ibaadaat (acts of worship) by which their Religion is established, and 'aadaat (customary practices) which are required for day-to-day living. From the principles of the Sharee'ah (Divinely Prescribed Islaamic Law) we know that acts of worship are those acts which have been prescribed by Allaah or approved by Him; nothing is to be affirmed here, except through the Sharee'ah. However, as far as worldly activities of people are concerned, they are necessary for everyday life. Here the principle is freedom of action; nothing may be restricted in this regard except what Allaah - the Most Perfect - has restricted. This is the case because commanding and prohibiting are both in Allaah's Hands. As far as worship is concerned, there has to be a command from Him concerning it. Thus, when it requires a command from Allaah to establish something, how can we say that something is restricted without His command? This is why Ahmad bin Hanbal (d.241H) and other jurists who base their judgements upon ahaadeeth (Prophetic narrations) say: **In relation to acts of worship, then the principle is tawqeef (limitation);** that is to say, nothing can be legislated in this regard except what Allaah legislates. To do otherwise is to incur the risk of being included in the meaning of the Aayah (verse):

"Do they have partners with Allaah who prescribe for them in the Religion that for which

Allaah has not given any permission." [Soorah ash-Shooraa 42:21].

However, as far as living habits are concerned, the principle here is freedom, because nothing can be restricted in this regard except what Allaah has prohibited. To do otherwise is to be included in the meaning of His saying:

"Say: Do you see what Allaah has sent down to you for sustenance? Yet you have made some part of it halaal (lawful) and some part haraam (prohibited)." [Soorah Yoonus 10:59].

This is a great and beneficial principle, on the basis of which we can say that buying, selling, leasing, giving gifts, and other such matters are necessary activities for people, as are eating, drinking and the wearing of clothes. Thus, if the Sharee'ah (Divinely Prescribed Islaamic Law) says something about these day-to-day matters, it is in order to teach good behaviour. Accordingly, it has prohibited whatever leads to corruption, has made obligatory that which is essential, has disapproved of that which is superfluous, and has approved of that which is beneficial. All this has been done with due consideration of the magnitude and properties of the various types of activities involved. Since this is the position of the Sharee'ah, people are free to buy, sell and to lease just as they wish, just as they are free to eat and drink what they like - as long as it is not haraam (unlawful). Even though some of these things may be disapproved, they are still free in this regard, since the Sharee'ah does not go to the extent of prohibiting them - and thus the original principle (of permissibility) remains."²

1. *Minhaajul-Qaasideen Mukhtasar fee Usoolil-Fiqh* (p.27) of Shaykh 'Abdur-Rahmaan as-Sa'dee.
2. *Al-Qawaa'idun-Nooraaniyyah al-Fiqhiyyah* (p.112-113).

RAMADAAN

Allaah - the Most High - said: **"The month of Ramadaan in which the Qur'aan was revealed, a guidance for mankind and clear proofs for the guidance of the Criterion between right and wrong. So whosoever of you sights the crescent for the month of Ramadaan, he must fast that month."** [Soorah al-Baqarah 2:185].

Allaah's Messenger sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

"Islam is built upon five: Testifying that none has the right to be worshipped except Allaah and the Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah, establishing the Prayer, giving the Zakaah, performing Hajj to the House, and fasting in Ramadaan."¹

He sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam also said:

"There has come to you Ramadaan, a blessed month, in which Allaah has made it obligatory to fast. During it the gates of Paradise are opened and the gates of Hellfire are closed, and the rebellious devils are chained. In it is a night (Laylatul-Qadr) which is better than a thousand months. He who is deprived of its good has truly been deprived."²

From the many important lessons to be learnt from fasting are:-

[1]: GAINING TAQWAA

Fasting has been legislated in order that we may gain taqwaa, as Allaah - the Most High - said: **"O you who believe! fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed upon those before you in order that you may attain taqwaa."** [Soorah al-Baqarah 2:183].

Talq ibn Habeeb (d.100H) - rahimahullaah - said:

"When fitnah (trial and tribulation) appears then extinguish it with taqwaa." So he was asked as to what taqwaa was, so he replied: "Taqwaa is to act in obedience to Allaah, upon a light (i.e. eemaan, faith) from Allaah, hoping in the Mercy of Allaah. And taqwaa is leaving acts of disobedience to Allaah, upon a light from Allaah, due to the fear of Allaah."³

"This is one of the best definitions of taqwaa. For every action must have both a starting point and a goal. And an action will not be considered as an act of obedience, or nearness to Allaah, unless it starts from pure eemaan (faith in Allaah). Thus, it is pure eemaan - and not habits, desires, nor seeking praise or fame, nor its like - that should be what initiates an action. And the goal of the action should be to earn the reward of Allaah and to seek His

good pleasure."⁴ So fasting is a means of attaining taqwaa, since it helps prevent a person from many sins that one is prone to. Due to this, the Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam said: "Fasting is a shield with which the servant protects himself from the Fire."⁵ So we should ask ourselves, after each day of fasting: Has this fasting made us more fearful and obedient to Allaah? Has it aided us in distancing ourselves from sins and disobedience?

[2]: SEEKING NEARNESS TO ALLAAH

The Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

"Allaah said: Whosoever shows enmity to a friend of Mine, I shall be at war with him. My servant does not draw near to Me with anything more beloved to Me than the obligatory duties that I have placed upon him. My servant continues to draw nearer to Me with optional deeds so that I shall love him."⁶

The Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

"Whosoever reaches the month of Ramadaan and does not have his sins forgiven, and so enters the Fire, then may Allaah distance him."⁷

So drawing closer to Allaah - the Most Perfect - in this blessed month, can be achieved by fulfilling one's obligatory duties; and also reciting the Qur'aan and reflecting upon its meanings, increasing in kindness and in giving charity, in making du'aa (supplication) to Allaah, attending the taraweeh Prayer, seeking out Laylatul-Qadr (the Night of Power and Pre-Decree), a night which is better than a thousand months, attending gatherings of knowledge, and striving in those actions that will cause the heart to draw closer to its Lord and to gain His forgiveness. Our level of striving in this blessed month should be greater than our striving to worship Allaah in any other month, due to the excellence and rewards that Allaah has placed in it. Likewise from the great means of seeking nearness to Allaah in this month is making i'tikaaf (seclusion in the mosque in order to worship Allaah) - for whoever is able.

Imaam Ibn al-Qayyim (d.751H) - rahimahullaah - said:

"Allaah also prescribed i'tikaaf for them, the objective being that the heart becomes fully preoccupied with Allaah - the Most High - concentrated upon Him alone, and cut-off from being preoccupied with the creation. Rather, the heart is only engrossed with Allaah - the Most Perfect - such that loving Him, remembering Him, and turning to Him takes the place of all the heart's anxieties and worries, so that he is able to overcome them. Thus all his concerns are for Allaah, and his thoughts are all directed towards remembering Him and thinking of how to attain His Pleasure and what will cause nearness to Him. This leads him to feel contented with Allaah, instead of people. This

in turn prepares him for being at peace with Allaah alone, on the day of loneliness in the grave, when there will be no one else to give comfort, nor anyone to grant solace, except Him. So this is the greater goal of i'tikaaf."⁸

[3]: ACQUIRING PATIENCE

Imaam Ahmad (d.241H) - rahimahullaah - said:

"Allaah has mentioned sabr (patience) in over ninety places in His Book."⁹

The Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

"The month of Patience, and the three days of every month, are times for fasting."¹⁰

Ibn 'Abdul-Barr (d.464H) - rahimahullaah - said:

"What is meant by the month of Patience is the month of Ramaadaan ... **So fasting is called patience because it restrains the soul** from eating, drinking, conjugal relations and sexual desires."¹¹

He sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

"O youths! Whoever amongst you is able to marry, then let him do so; for it restrains the eyes and protects the private parts. But whoever is unable, then let him fast, because it will be a shield for him."¹²

So fasting is a means of learning self-restraint and patience. With patience we are able to strengthen our resolve to worship Allaah alone, with sincerity, and also cope with life's ups and downs. So - for example - with patience we are able to perform our Prayers calmly and correctly, without being hasty, and without merely pecking the ground several times! With patience we are able to restrain our souls from greed and stinginess and thus give part of our surplus wealth in Zakaah (obligatory charity). With patience we are able to subdue the soul's ill temperament, and thus endure the ordeal and hardships of Hajj, without losing tempers and behaving badly. Likewise, with patience we are able to stand firm and fight Jihaad against the disbelievers, hypocrites and heretics - withstanding their constant onslaught, without wavering and buckling, without despairing or being complacent, and without becoming hasty and impatient at the first signs of hardship. Allaah - the Most High - said: **"O Prophet, urge the Believers to fight ... So if there are one hundred who are patient, they shall overcome two hundred; and if there be one thousand, they shall overcome two thousand, by the permission of Allaah. And Allaah is with the patient ones."** [Soorah al-Anfaal 8:65-66].

Thus, without knowledge and patience, nothing remains, except zeal and uncontrolled emotions, shouts and hollow slogans, speech that does not strengthen, but rather weakens, and actions that do not build, but rather destroy! So in this month, we should strive to develop a firm resolve for doing acts of obedience, and to adorn ourselves with patience - having certainty in the saying of our Messenger sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam: "And know that victory comes with patience, relief with affliction, and ease with hardship."¹³

[4]: CULTIVATING GOOD MANNERS

The Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

"Whosoever does not abandon falsehood in speech and action, then Allaah the Mighty and Majestic has no need that he should leave his food and drink."¹⁴

He sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam also said:

"Fasting is not merely abstaining from eating and drinking. Rather, it is also abstaining from ignorant and indecent speech. So if anyone abuses or behaves ignorantly with you, then say: I am fasting, I am fasting."¹⁵

These narrations point towards the importance of truthfulness and good manners. Thus, this blessed month teaches us not only to abstain from food and drink, but to also abstain from such statements and actions that may be the cause of harming people and violating their rights - since the Messenger sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam said whilst describing the true Believer: "A Muslim is one from whom other Muslims are safe from his tongue and his hand."¹⁶ Thus it is upon us as individuals, to examine the shortcomings in our character, and to then seek to improve them - modelling ourselves upon the character of the last of the Prophets and Messengers; and their leader, Muhammad sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam - aspiring also for the excellence which he mentioned in his saying: "I am a guarantor for a house on the outskirts of Paradise for whosoever leaves off arguing, even if he is in the right; and a house in the centre of Paradise for whosoever abandons falsehood, even when joking; and a house in the upper-most part of Paradise for whosoever makes his character good."¹⁷ So by shunning oppression, shamelessness, harbouring hatred towards Muslims, back-biting, slandering, tale-carrying, and other types of falsehood, we can be saved from nullifying the rewards of our fasting - as Allaah's Messenger sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam said: "It may be that a fasting person receives nothing from his fast, except hunger and thirst."¹⁸

[5]: SENSING MUSLIM UNITY

The Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam said:

"Fast when they fast, and break your fast when they break their fast, and sacrifice the day they sacrifice."¹⁹

Imaam at-Tirmidhee (d.275H) - rahimahullaah - said:

"Some of the People of Knowledge explained this hadeeth by saying: Its meaning is to fast and break the fast along with the jamaa'ah and the majority of people."²⁰

Thus, in this blessed month we can sense an increased feeling of unity and of being a single Ummah due to our fasting and breaking our fast collectively. We also feel an increased awareness about the state of affairs of the Muslims and of the hardships that they endure, because: "During the fast, a Muslim feels and experiences what his needy and hungry brothers and sisters feel, who are forced to go without food and drink for many many days - as occurs today to many of the Muslims in Africa."²¹ Indeed, the unity of the Muslims - and their aiding and assisting one another - is one of the great fundamentals upon which the Religion of Islaam is built, as Allaah - the Most High - said: **"And hold fast altogether to the rope of Allaah and do not be divided."** [Soorah Aal-'Imraan 3:103]. Allaah - the Most High - also said: **"The Believers - men and women - and friends and protectors to one another."** [Soorah al-Tawbah 9:44].

Shaykhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) - rahimahullaah - said:

"The welfare of people will not be complete - neither in this world, nor in the Hereafter - except with *ijtimaa'* (collectiveness), *ta'aawun* (mutual co-operation), and *tanaasur* (mutual help); mutual-co-operation in order to secure benefits, and mutual help in order to ward off harm. It is for this reason that man is said to be social and civil by nature."²²

Thus we see that Islaam lays great importance in bringing hearts together and encouraging *ijtimaa'* (collectiveness). This is not only reflected in the month of Ramadaan, but also in the other acts of worship as well. So, for example, we have been ordered by the Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam to pray the five daily Prayers in congregation, and that it has been made twenty-seven times more rewardful than praying it individually.²³ Likewise, this similar collective spirit is demonstrated in the act of Hajj (Pilgrimage). Even in learning knowledge and studying it, blessings have been placed in collectiveness, as Allaah's Messenger sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam said: "No people gather together in a house from the houses of Allaah, reciting the Book of Allaah and studying it amongst themselves, except that tranquility descends upon them, mercy envelops them, the angels surround them, and Allaah mentions them to those that are with Him."²⁴ Likewise, even in our everyday actions such, as eating, Islaam teaches us collectiveness. Thus, when some of the Companions of the Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam said to him: O Messenger of Allaah, we eat but do not become satisfied. He replied: "Perhaps you eat individually?" They replied: Yes! So he said: "Eat collectively and mention the name of Allaah. There will then be blessings for you in it."²⁵ Indeed, even in the etiquettes of sitting the spirit of collectiveness is demonstrated. So, one day the Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam came across the Companions who were sitting in separate circles, so he said to them: "Why do I see you sitting separately!"²⁶ Similarly, Abu Tha'labah al-Khushanee radiallyaahu 'anhu said: Whenever the people used to encamp, they used to split-up into the mountain passes and valley's. So Allaah's Messenger sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam said: "Indeed your being split-up in these mountain passes and valley's is from Shaytaan." Thereafter, whenever they used to encamp, they used to keep very close together, to such an extent that it was said: If a cloth were to be spread over them, it would cover them all.²⁷

Thus, Ramadaan is a time to increase our sense of unity and brotherhood, and our commitment to Allaah and His Religion. And there is no doubt that this sense of unity necessitates that: "We all work together as required by Islaam as sincere brothers - not due to hizbiyyah (bigotted party spirit), nor sectarianism - in order to realise that which is of benefit to the Islaamic Ummah and to establish the Islaamic society that every Muslim aspires for - so that the Sharee'ah (Prescribed Law) of Allaah is applied upon His earth."²⁸ So we must examine ourselves during the month of Ramadaan and ask: What is my role - and each of us has a role - in helping this precious Ummah to regain its honour, and return to the Ummah its comprehensive unity and strength, and victory that has been promised to it? Likewise, we should reflect upon our own character and actions and ask: Are they aiding the process of unity and brotherhood, or are they a harm and a hindrance to it?

So we ask Allaah to grant us the ability to change ourselves for the better, during this blessed month, and not to be of those who are prevented from

His Mercy and Forgiveness. Indeed He is the One who Hears and He is the One to Respond.

1. Related by al-Bukhaaree (1/48) and Muslim (no.16), from Ibn 'Umar radiallyaahu 'anhu.
2. **Saheeh:** Related by an-Nasaa'ee (no.1992), from Abu Hurayrah radiallyaahu 'anhu. It was authenticated by Shaykh al-Albaanee in *Takhreejul-Mishkaat* (no.1962).
3. Related by Ibn al-Mubaarak in *Kitaabuz-Zuhd* (p.473) and Ibn Abee Shaybah in his *Kitaabul-Eemaan* (no.99).
4. *Risaalatut-Tabookiyyah* (p.26) of Imaam Ibn al-Qayyim.
5. **Hasan:** Related by Ahmad (3/241), from Jaabir radiallyaahu 'anhu. It was authenticated by Shaykh al-Albaanee in *Saheehut-Targheeb* (no.970).
6. Related by al-Bukhaaree (11/481), from Abu Hurayrah radiallyaahu 'anhu.
7. **Saheeh:** Related by Ahmad (2/246) and al-Bayhaqee (4/204), from Abu Hurayrah radiallyaahu 'anhu. It was authenticated by Shaykh 'Alee Hasan al-Halabee in *Sifatus-Sawmin-Nabee* (p.24).
8. *Zaadul-Ma'aad* (2/87) of Ibn al-Qayyim.
9. Related by Ibn al-Qayyim in *Madaarijus-Saalikeen* (2/152).
10. Related by Ahmad (2/263) and an-Nasaa'ee (1/327), from Abu Hurayrah. It was authenticated by al-Albaanee in *Irwaa'ul-Ghaleel* (4/99).
11. *At-Tamheed* (19/61) of Al-Haafidh Ibn 'Abdul-Barr.
12. Related by al-Bukhaaree (123) and Muslim (no.123), from Ibn Mas'ood radiallyaahu 'anhu.
13. **Saheeh:** Related by Ahmad (1/203) and at-Tabaraanee in al-Kabeer (11/100), from Ibn 'Abbaas radiallyaahu 'anhu. It was authenticated by Shaykh Saleem al-Hilaalee in *AsSabur-Jameel* (p.43).
14. Related by al-Bukhaaree (4/99), from Abu Hurayrah radiallyaahu 'anhu.
15. **Saheeh:** Related by Ibn Khuzaymah (no.1996) and al-Haakim (1/430) who authenticated it. Refer to *Saheehut-Targheeb* (no.1075).
16. Related by al-Bukhaaree (1/53) and Muslim (no.40), from 'Amr ibn al-'Aas radiallyaahu 'anhu.
17. **Saheeh:** Related by Abu Daawood (no.4800) and al-Bayhaqee (10/249), from Abu Umaamah radiallyaahu 'anhu. It was authenticated by al-Albaanee in *as-Saheehah* (no.273).
18. **Saheeh:** Related by Ahmad (2/441) and Ibn Maajah (1/539), from Abu Hurayrah radiallyaahu 'anhu. It was authenticated in *Saheehut-Targheeb* (no.1076).
19. Related by at-Tirmidhee (no.693), from Abu Hurayrah radiallyaahu 'anhu. It was authenticated by al-Albaanee in *as-Saheehah* (no.224).
20. *Jaami'ut-Tirmidhee* (3/312).
21. From the words of Shaykh 'Abdul-'Azeez bin Baaz, as occurs in *Majmoo' Fataawaa wa Maqaalaat Mutanawwi'ah* (5/211).
22. *Al-Hisbaa fil-Islaam* (p.9) of Shaykhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah.
23. Related by al-Bukhaaree (2/109) and Muslim (no.650), from Ibn 'Umar radiallyaahu 'anhu.
24. Related by Muslim (no.339), from Abu Hurayrah radiallyaahu 'anhu.
25. **Hasan:** Related by Abu Daawood (no.3764), from Wahshee ibn Harb radiallyaahu 'anhu. It was authenticated by al-Haafidh al-'Iraaqee in *Takhreejul-Ihya* (2/4).
26. Related by Muslim (no.331), from Jaabir ibn Samurah radiallyaahu 'anhu.
27. **Saheeh:** Related by Abu Daawood (1/409) and Ibn Hibbaan (no.1664). Shaykh al-Albaanee authenticated in *Takhreejul-Mishkaat* (no.3914).
28. *Suaalu wa Jawaabu Hawla Fiqhil-Waaqi'* (p.24) of Shaykh Naasirud-Deen al-Albaanee.

Questions on Ramadaan

DETERMINING THE BEGINNING OF RAMADAAN

[Q]: Is it permissible to rely upon astronomical calculations in determining the start of Ramadaan?

[A]: "The Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* ordered the Muslims saying: "Do not fast until you see the new moon, and do not stop fasting until you see it, and if it is concealed by clouds then count out (the thirty days of *Sha'baan*) for it."¹ And he *'alayhis-salaatu was-salaam* said: "We are an illiterate nation that neither writes nor calculates (i.e. using astronomical calculations). The month is either like this, or this. Meaning: Sometimes it is of twenty-nine days, and sometimes it is of thirty."² And it is established in the *Sabeeh* (no.1909) of al-Bukhaaree from Abu Hurayrah *radiallaahu 'anhu* that the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "Fast when it (the moon) is seen, and cease fasting when it is seen, so if it is concealed by clouds then complete thirty days of *Sha'baan*." And he *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* also said: "Do not fast until you have seen the moon, and if it is concealed by clouds then complete thirty days."³ There are plenty of *ahaadeeth* in this connection, and all of them point towards the obligation of actually sighting the moon, or if unable, then to complete the number of days in the absence of observing it. These narrations also point towards the impermissibility of using astronomical calculations in this regard. And Shaykhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah has actually stated an *ijmaa'* (consensus) from the People of Knowledge about the impermissibility of relying upon astronomical calculations in this regard - and this is the truth about which there is no doubt.⁴ And with Allaah alone is the ability."⁵

BRUSHING ONE'S TEETH WHILST FASTING

[Q]: Is it permissible to use a *miswaak* to

brush one's teeth, whilst fasting. And is it permissible to use toothpaste as well? What if some blood appears whilst I brush my teeth, does this invalidate my fast?

[A]: "There is no problem in cleaning one's teeth using either water, *miswaak* or toothbrush, whilst fasting. Some have held it to be *makrooh* (detested) to use a *miswaak* whilst fasting, since it changes the smell of a person's breath. However, what is correct is that it is recommended to use a *miswaak* in the beginning and the end of the day, since doing so does not change the odour, rather it just cleanses the mouth from impurities and small pieces of food that become lodged in one's teeth. As regards to the use of toothpaste, then using it is *makrooh* (detested), since it contains a distinctive taste and flavour which may then get mixed with one's saliva and then be swallowed. Thus, whosoever needs to use it should do so after taking the *suboor* (the pre-dawn meal), before the time of Fajr and fasting begins. However, if one can safeguard allowing the toothpaste and saliva to be mixed then swallowed, then there is no harm in using such toothpaste. If - whilst cleaning one's teeth with water, *miswaak* or a toothbrush - a small amount of blood flows out, then this does not break the fast, and Allaah knows best."⁶

CONCERNING THE TARAWEEH PRAYER

[Q]: Some people insist that there is an *ijmaa'* (consensus) from the four well-known Imaams - Abu Haneefah, Maalik, ash-Shaafi'ee and Ahmad bin Hanbal, *rahimabumullaah* - on praying **only** twenty *rak'abs* for *taraaweeth*. Is this correct?

[A]: "This is an erroneous claim. This is what has been stated in the *Hanafee* books of *fiqh* (jurisprudence), for we do not find any book that can be authentically ascribed to Abu Haneefah (d.150H) *rahimabullaah*. Rather,

what is apparent from looking into *al-Muwattaa* of Imaam Muhammad (one of the main students of the Abu Haneefah) is that Abu Haneefah's *madhhab* (school of thought) was to pray eleven *rak'abs*.

Imaam Muhammad includes a chapter in *al-Muwattaa* (p.110), stating: "Chapter: Establishing the Night Prayer in the month of Ramadaan, and the virtues contained in it." Under this chapter he relates four *ahaadeeth*. The first, third and fourth narrations do not make mention of any specified number of *rak'abs* for the *Taraaweeth* Prayer, rather they just mention the excellence of establishing Prayer in congregation and the excellence of the night Prayer in Ramadaan. However, in the second narration eleven *rak'abs* is mentioned. Then Imaam Muahmmad said (p.111): "And we take all of this." ... Thus, he has shown that his *madhhab* is eleven *rak'abs*, and this can only be the *madhhab* of Imaam Abu Haneefah - *rahmatullaah 'alayhi* - as well.

Ash-Shaafi'ee (d.204H) - *rahimabullaah* - said: "There is no limit to its maximum number, since it is an optional Prayer. Thus, if the standing is lengthened, whilst the number of prostrations shortened (i.e. the number of *rak'abs* are fewer), then that is good and that is what is most beloved to me. However, if the number of prostrations and bowings are increased (i.e. the number of *rak'abs* are increased), then this is also good."⁷ So it is affirmed that Imaam ash-Shaafi'ee - *rahimabullaah* - does not advocate restricting the number of *rak'abs* to twenty. Rather, he gives preference for there to be fewer *rak'abs* and an increase in the length of standing.

Imaam Ahmad bin Hanbal (d.241H) has approved of eleven *rak'abs* as well as twenty - as Shaykhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah says in *al-Ikhtiyaaraatul-Ilmiyyah* (p.38) and Shah Waleeullaah says in *al-Misriyyah* (1/174) and *al-Musaffaa* (1/177).

Imaam Maalik (d.179H) - *rahimabullaah* - also supports eleven *rak'abs*, as Shaykhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah mentioned in *al-Ikhtiyaraat* (p.38) and as Jalaalud-Deen as-Suyootee mentions in *al-Haawee lil-Fataawaa* (p.350), where he said: al-Jooree,

one of our companions said, from Maalik who said: "That which 'Umar ibn al-Khattaab gathered the people upon is more beloved to us, and that was eleven *rak'abs*, and that was the prayer of Allaah's Messenger *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*." It was said to him: Eleven *rak'abs* with the *Witr*? So he said: Yes, and thirteen is close." Then he said: **"I do not know from where they have introduced these numerous rukoo's (bowings)."**⁸

Praying eleven *rak'abs* is based upon a number of authentic narrations, from them:-

[1] What al-Bukhaaree relates in his *Sabeeh* (no.2013) from Abu Salamah ibn 'Abdur-Rahmaan who relates that he asked 'Aaishah *radiallaahu 'anhaa*: How was the Prayer of the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* in Ramadaan? So she said: "Allaah's Messenger *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* did not used to pray more than eleven *rak'abs* during Ramadaan or in other than Ramadaan. He would pray four *rak'abs*, and do not ask about their beauty and length. Then he would pray another four, and do not ask about their beauty and length. Then he would pray three (*witr*)."

[2] Jaabir *radiallaahu 'anhu* said: "Allaah's Messenger *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* led us in the month of Ramadaan with eight *rak'abs* and *witr*. Then on the following night we gathered in the mosque and hoped that he would come out, and we continued in that state until morning. Then we entered our houses, so we said: O Messenger of Allaah, we gathered in the mosque last night hoping that you would pray with us. So he said: *"I feared that it would become prescribed (i.e. obligatory) for you."*⁹

[3] Imaam Maalik relates in his *al-Muwatta* (no.248): From Muhammad ibn Yoosuf, from as-Saa'ib ibn Yazeed who said: "'Umar ibn al-Khattaab ordered 'Ubayy ibn Ka'b and Tameemud-Daaree to lead the people in Prayer with eleven *rak'abs*. And the reciter would recite some hundreds of Verses untill one of us would lean upon a stick because of the length of standing, and we had not used to finish until the appearance of Fajr."¹⁰

[4] 'Ubayy ibn Ka'b came to Allaah's Messenger *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*

and said: O Messenger of Allaah, something happened with me last night - meaning in Ramadaan. So he said: *"And what was that 'Ubayy?"* He said: Some women in my house said, we do not recite the Qur'aan, so can you lead us in Prayer? So I lead them in eight *rak'abs* and prayed the *witr*. And this was a *Sunnab* of his approval, since he remained quiet and he did not say anything.¹¹

So all this goes to show that insisting that there is a consensus on praying **only** twenty *rak'abs* for *taraaweesh* - claiming this to be the **only** view of all the four well-known Imaams - is not only incorrect, but is against the established evidence. As regards a detailed discussion regarding the whole issue, then this is not possible here, nor is it the place to discuss the correctness, or merits, of praying twenty *rak'abs* over eight, or vice-versa. Rather, one can find such discussions in the relevant chapters in the books of *fiqh*, whilst remembering that: **"Difference in opinion must not be a source of obstinacy nor anger."**¹²

WHAT SHOULD I DO IN RAMADAAN

[Q]: What should a fasting person do, and what is obligatory upon him?

[A]: "The fasting person must increase in obedience to Allaah, and to keep away from all the prohibited matters. It is obligatory upon the fasting person to safeguard the obligatory duties and to distance himself from all the prohibitions. So he should pray the five daily Prayers in their correct times and in congregation, and abandon lying, backbiting, cheating, dealing in usury, and all other prohibited matters. The Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: *"Whosoever does not abandon falsehood in speech and action, then Allaah the Mighty and Majestic has no need that he should leave his food and drink."*^{13,14}

EYE DROPS AND VOMITING

[Q]: Is it permissible to use eye or ear-drops whilst fasting, or does it invalidate the fast? And does vomiting also break the fast?

[A]: "Whosoever uses eye or ear drops for medicinal purposes, then this does not

invalidate their fast, and this is the correct opinion. This is because such drops are not termed as being food or drink - neither are they called so by convention, nor by Islaamic terminology - and this is because such drops are administered through those places which food and drink are not administered. However, if taking such drops could be delayed until the night, then this would avoid entering into any difference of opinion. Similarly, whosoever vomits whilst fasting, then this does not invalidate their fast. This is because Allaah does not burden a soul with more than it can bear, and also that the *Sharee'ah* (Divinely Prescribed Islaamic Law) is built upon facilitating ease and removing hardships, as Allaah - the Most High - said: **"And We have not made for you any hardships in the Religion."** [Soorah al-Baqarah 2:222]. Also, the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: *"Whosoever has an attack of vomiting then no attonement is required of him, but whoever intentionally vomits, then let him atone for it."*^{15,16}

1. Related by al-Bukhaaree (1906) and Muslim (no.1080), from Ibn 'Umar *radiallaahu 'anhu*.
2. Related by al-Bukhaaree (no.1913), from Ibn 'Umar *radiallaahu 'anhu*.
3. Related by al-Bukhaaree (no.1907), from Ibn 'Umar.
4. Refer to *Fathul-Baaree* (4/159) of al-Haafidh Ibn Hajr.
5. Answered by Shaykh 'Abdul-Azeez bin Baaz in *Fataawas-Siyaam* (p.13).
6. Answered by Shaykh Ibn Jibreel in *Fataawas-Siyaam* (p.40).
7. Quoted by Ibn Nasr al-Marwaze in *Qiyaamul-Layl* (p.92).
8. *Tanqeed Sadeed bi Risaalati Ijtibaad wa Taqleed* (pp.266-268) of Shaykh Badee'ud-Deen as-Sindee
9. Related by Ibn Nasr (p.90) and others. Al-Haafidh Ibn Hajr indicated in *Fathul-Baaree* (3/10) that the narration is strong.
10. Shaykh al-Albaanee says in *Salaatul-Taraaweesh* (p.45): "And its chain of narration is *Sabeeh Jiddan* (extremely authentic)."
11. **Hasan**: Related by Ibn Nasr al-Marwaze (p.90). It was authenticated by Shaykh al-Albaanee in *Salaatul-Taraaweesh* (p.68).
12. From *Aadaabul-Khilaaf* (p.7) of Shaykh Saalih al-Humaid.
13. Related by al-Bukhaaree (4/99), from Abu Hurayrah *radiallaahu 'anhu*.
14. Answered by Ibn al-'Uthaymeen in *Fataawas-Siyaam* (pp.24-25).
15. **Saheeh**: Related by Abu Daawood (2/310). It was authenticated by Ibn Taymiyyah in *Haqqeeqatus-Siyaam* (p.14).
16. Answered by the Committee of Major Scholars in *Fataawas-Siyaam* (p.44).

RAMADAN

A REMINDER OF UNITY

By the Shaykh - the Scholar of Hadeeth - Muhammad Naasirud-Deen al-Albaanee¹

Abu Hurayrah *radiallaahu 'anhu* related that the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam* said: "Fast when they fast, end the fast when they end theirs, and sacrifice the day that they sacrifice."²

Al-Bayhaquee relates by way of Abu Haneefah, who said: 'Alee ibn al-Aqmar related to me, from Masrooq, who said: I entered upon 'Aishah on the day of 'Arafah, so she said: "Serve Masrooq with some gruel, and make it more sweeter." Masrooq said: Nothing prevented me from fasting this day except that I feared that it may be the day of Sacrifice. So 'Aishah said to me: **"The day of Sacrifice is when the people sacrifice, and the day of ending the fast is when the people end their fast."**

This chain of narration is *jayyid* (good), due to what has preceded.

UNDERSTANDING THE HADEETH

Imaam at-Tirmidhee says after quoting the hadeeth:

"One of the People of Knowledge has explained this hadeeth by saying: Its meaning is to fast and end the fast along with the *Jamaa'ab* and the majority of people."

As-San'aanee said in *Sublus-Salaam* (2/72):

"In this (hadeeth) is a proof that being in agreement with the people is accepted in establishing the 'Eed, and that the individual person who believes that it is the day of 'Eed - because of sighting the moon - then it is obligatory upon him to be in agreement with the people, and that the ruling of the people - concerning the Prayer, breaking the fast, and sacrificing - is binding upon that individual."

Ibn al-Qayyim - *rahimabullaah* - mentioned this meaning in *Tabdbeebus-Sunan* (3/214), and said: "It is said: In it is a refutation of those who say that whosoever knows the positions of the moon due to astronomical calculations, then it is permissible for him to fast and end the fast, even if others do not know. It is also said: That the

individual witness who sees the moon, but the *qaadee* (judge) has not accepted his testimony, then there is no fasting for him, just as there is no fasting for the people."

Abul-Hasan as-Sindee said in *Haashiyah 'alaa Ibn Maajah*, after mentioning the hadeeth of Abu Hurayrah which was related by at-Tirmidhee: "And its apparent meaning is: That there is no room for individual (opinions) to enter into these affairs, nor to act individually in this. Rather, this affair goes back to the Imaam (the Leader of the Muslims) and the *Jamaa'ab* (united body of Muslims under the Imaam). It is obligatory upon the individuals to follow the Imaam and the *Jamaa'ab*. From this is that if an individual sights the moon, but the *qaadee* rejects his witness, then the individual has no right in these matters, but rather he must follow the *Jamaa'ab* in this."

And this is the meaning which is evident from the hadeeth, and which is emphasised by the fact that 'Aishah *radiallaahu 'anhaa* used it with Masrooq when he prevented himself from fasting on the day of 'Arafah, fearing that it could be the day of Sacrifice. So she explained to him that there is no weight given to his individual opinion in this, and that he should follow the *Jamaa'ab*. So she said to him: **"The day of Sacrifice is when the people sacrifice, and the day of ending the fast is when the people end their fast."**

And this is what is befitting for the easy-natured and tolerant *Sharee'ab* (Prescribed Islaamic Law), one of the goals of which is uniting the people together, unifying their ranks and keeping away from them all that would split their comprehensive unity - from the individual opinions. So the *Sharee'ab* does not give any weight to the individual opinion in matters concerning *'ibaadah jamaa'iyyah* (collective acts of worship); such as Fasting, 'Eed, and Prayer in congregation - even if the opinion is correct, from one angle. Do you not see that the *Sabaabah* (the Companions) - *radiallaahu 'anhum* - used to pray behind each other. So from them were those who held

the view that touching a woman, or the flowing of blood from the body invalidates the *wudhoo* (ablution), along with those who did not hold this view. From them were those who would complete the Prayer whilst travelling, whilst others shortened. Yet these, and other such differences, did not prevent them from collectively praying behind a single Imaam and deeming it to be acceptable. And this is because they knew that *tafarruq* (splitting-up) in the Religion is more evil than having *ikhtilaaf* (differences) in some opinions. Indeed, the matter with one of them reached the extent that he would not even deem acceptable any opinion which differed with the great Imaam in the major gatherings; such as the gathering at Minaa (during Hajj), to the extent that he would totally abandon acting upon his opinion in that gathering - fleeing from that which could result from this evil, because of acting according to his own opinion.

Thus, Abu Daawood relates (1/307) that 'Uthmaan *radiallaahu 'anhu* prayed four *rak'abs* at Minaa, so 'Abdullaah ibn Mas'ood criticised him saying: "I prayed two *rak'abs* with the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*, and two *rak'abs* with Abu Bakr, and two *rak'abs* with 'Umar, and two *rak'abs* with 'Uthmaan in the beginning of his rule, then he completed it (i.e. by praying four *rak'abs*). After that the ways became divided with you all. So I hope from these four *rak'abs*, that two of them would be accepted." Then Ibn Mas'ood prayed four *rak'abs*. So it was said to him: You criticised 'Uthmaan, yet you prayed four? So he said: "**Differing is evil.**"

Its chain of narration is *Sabeeh* (authentic), and something similar to this is related in the *Musnad* (5/155) of Imaam Ahmad, from Abu Dharr *radiallaahu 'anhum ajma'een*.

So those who continue splitting-up with regards to the Prayer, and who refuse to follow the local Imaams in some mosques - especially in the *witr* Prayer during Ramadaan - using as proof that this is against their *madhbab* (school of thought), then they should reflect upon the above mentioned hadeeth and *athar* (narration). Likewise, those who claim knowledge of astronomy and who, due to their opinion, fast and end their fast alone - preceding or lagging behind the majority of Muslims, not seeing any problem in doing so - should also reflect upon the previously quoted proofs. So all of them should consider, and reflect upon the knowledge that has been mentioned. Perhaps they will find for themselves a cure for their ignorance and self-delusion, so that they may then become a unified rank along with their Muslim brothers - for indeed the Hand of Allaah is over the *Jamaa'ah*.

1. *Silsilatul-Abaadeethus-Sabeehab* (1/442-445), the hadeeth authentications have been abridged and edited.

2. **Saheeh:** Related by at-Tirmidhee (2/37). Shaykh al-Albaanee authenticated it in *as-Sabeehab* (no.224).

DEVELOPING LOVE FOR ALLAAH

Ibn al-Qayyim (d.751H) - rahimahullaah - said:

"People have discussed about mahabbah (love of Allaah); its causes and what brings it about, its signs, its fruits, and its rulings. The most comprehensive saying about this is what Abu Bakr al-Kattaanee - rahimahullaah - relates about al-Junayd (d.279H).

Abu Bakr al-Kattaanee (d.322H) said:

"A discussion about mahabbah took place in Makkah during the Pilgrimage month. The Shaykhs who were present spoke about this matter, and al-Junayd was the youngest of them. They said to him: O 'Iraaqee, what do you have to say? So he bowed his head and tears were flowing from his eyes, then he said:

"A servant should overcome his soul;
And be continuous in the remembrance of his Lord;
Establishing the rights of his Lord;
Focusing upon Him with his heart;
The late of fear setting ablaze his heart;
Whilst drinking from the vessel of true love;
And certain realities become unveiled for him.
So when he talks, it is due to Allaah.
When he speaks, it is from Allaah.
When he moves, it is by the Command of Allaah.
And when he is serene, then it is from Allaah.
He belongs to Allaah, is for Allaah, and is with Allaah."

So the Shaykhs started to weep and said: How can that be increased upon. May Allaah reward you with good, O crown of the knowledgeable ones!"¹

Imaam Ibn al-Qayyim - rahimahullaah - further said:

"The reasons which cause mahabbah (love of Allaah) to develop are ten-
Firstly: Reciting the Qur'aan, reflecting upon it, and understanding its meanings. **Secondly:** Drawing closer to Allaah through the performance of optional deeds, after fulfilling the obligatory duties. **Thirdly:** Being continuous in the dhikr (remembrance) of Allaah - in all circumstances - with the tongue, the heart and the limbs. The more constant the dhikr, the more mahabbah develops and intensifies. **Fourthly:** Giving precedence to what Allaah loves - when being overcome with desires - over what one personally loves and desires. **Fifthly:** Causing the heart to contemplate over the Names and the Attributes of Allaah, being a witness to what they necessitate, and causing the heart to be enlivened in the garden of this realisation. **Sixthly:** Witnessing the blessing and favours of Allaah; the apparent and the hidden. **Seventhly:** Subduing the heart and humbling it before Allaah, causing it to be in awe of Him. **Eighthly:** Being in seclusion during that time in which Allaah descends to the lowest heaven; reciting the Qur'aan, and finishing this recitation with seeking Allaah's forgiveness and sincerely repenting to Him. **Ninthly:** Sitting in the gatherings of the true and sincere lovers of Allaah; reaping the benefits of their teachings, and not speaking except when you know that there is benefit in doing so, and that such speech will increase you in goodness and benefit others as well. **Tenthly:** Keeping clear of all those matters which will cause the heart to distance itself from Allaah - the Mighty and Majestic.

So these are ten matters which causes the lover to reach the station of true love for Allaah, so that he may then reach Allaah - his Beloved."²

1. Madaarijus-Saalikeen (3/9).

2. Madaarijus-Saalikeen (3/17-18).

BEING BALANCED

A FACT ABOUT PEOPLE AND GROUPS

Imaam Jamaalud-Deen al-Qaasimee (d.1288H) - rahimahullaah - said:

From that which is well-known about what occurs when people gather together upon some matter, is that any group which becomes strong and has many followers, then you will definitely find in them the pure and the impure, the justly-balanced and the imbalanced, the extreme and the moderate. And a well established fact is that the extremists are more vocal and have greater acceptance, since the ones who are justly-balanced follow a middle course. And those who seek this balanced approach are few in number, in every age and place. As for extremism, then this is what most people thrive upon, and what the over-whelming majority incline towards - and this has been the path of the various sects and religions as well. So the extremists try to monopolise their being mention amongst people and to be single in their da'wah. And they did not find any way to gain a monopoly over people except by extremism, which they achieve by degrading people and belittling them at every possible opportunity; either by their tongues, or other than that. And the first to open this door - the door of unleashing their tongues against those who oppose them - were the Khawaarij. And this is the route by which they came to the masses, through the door of takfeer (declaring a Muslim to be an unbeliever), in order that the masses would flee from other than them, so that they could then secure a relationship with the masses for themselves. Then this disease was transmitted to others, such that the extreme elements of each group started unjustly declaring Muslims to be either unbelievers, sinners, innovators or deviants ..."¹

DEALING WITH THOSE WHO ERR OR DEVIATE

Shaykhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah (d.728H) - rahimahullaah - said:

"The Imaams of the Sunnah and the Jamaa'ah, and the people of knowledge and eemaan (faith) have in them 'adl (justice), 'ilm (knowledge) and rahmah (mercy), and they know the truth which conforms to the Sunnah and which is free from innovations. They do justice to those who depart from the Sunnah and the Jamaa'ah, even if they have been wronged, just as Allaah - the Most High - said: **"O you who believe!! Stand out firmly for Allaah and be witnesses, and do not let the hatred of others swerve you away from doing justice. But be just! That is closer to taqwaa (piety)."** [Soorah al-Maa'idah 5:8]. Likewise, they are merciful to the creation; desiring for them goodness, guidance and knowledge. They never intend for them any harm or evil. Rather, when they criticise them and explain to them their error, ignorance or wrong-doing, then their purpose in doing so is only to clarify the truth, and to be merciful to the creation, to enjoin the good and forbid the evil, and to make the word of Allaah uppermost so that the way of life becomes purely for Allaah."²

THE BALANCED APPROACH

Shaykhul Islam Ibn Taymiyyah - rahimahullaah - said:

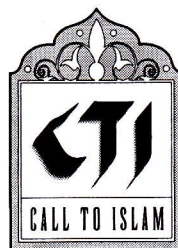
"When dealing with the people of sin, one must not exceed the limits prescribed by the Sharee'ah - neither in hating, censuring, preventing, abandoning or chastising them. Rather, the one who does so should be told: **Worry about your ownself. No harm will come to you from those who are misled, if you are truly guided, as Allaah - the Most High - said: "And do not let your hatred of others swerve you away from doing justice. But be just! That is closer to taqwaa (piety)."** [Soorah al-Maa'idah 5:8]. And Allaah said: **"And fight in the way of Allaah those who fight you, but do not transgress the limits."** [Soorah al-Baqarah 2:190]. Indeed, many of those who command and forbid overstep the limits set by Allaah, either through jahl (ignorance) or dhulm (injustice). Thus, this issue (of justice) must be firmly maintained, whether it is in regards to censuring the unbelievers, the hypocrites, the sinners or the disobedient ones."³

He further said: "The one commanding the good or forbidding the evil should do so in the way prescribed by the Sharee'ah; with knowledge, gentleness and patience, and with good intentions, and by following a balanced approach. All of this enters into Allaah's saying: **"O you who believe! Beware of your ownself. No harm will come to you from those who are misled, if you are truly guided."** [Soorah al-Maa'idah 5:105] ... There is in this Aayah (Verse) another meaning as well, which is that a person must turn towards that which will be of benefit to him, both in knowledge and action, and he must avoid what does not concern him - as the conveyer of the Sharee'ah (i.e. the Prophet sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said: "From the perfection of a person's Islaam is to leave alone that which does not concern him."⁴ This especially applies to a person delving into that which does not concern him regarding someone's religious or worldly affairs. Thus, such a person may speak out of envy or desire for position; or act either with deliberate oppression, or foolish scorn and sarcasm. How often does Shaytaan make such an act appear to be an act of commanding the good or prohibiting the evil, or Jihaad in the path of Allaah, whereas it is actually an act of injustice and transgression!"⁵

A COMPREHENSIVE DESCRIPTION

Shaykhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah - rahimahullaah - also said: "And Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah follow the Book and the Sunnah, obey Allaah and His Messenger, they follow the truth and are merciful to the creation."⁶

1. Al-Jarh wat-Ta'deel (pp.4-5).
2. Radd 'alal-Bakree (p.256) of Shaykhul-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah.
3. Majmoo'ul-Fataawaa (14/381).
4. Saheeh: Related by at-Tirmidhee (no.2318) and others, from Abu Hurayrah radiallaahu 'anhu. It was authenticated by Shaykh al-Albaanee in Saheeh Sunan Ibn Maajah (no.3976).
5. Majmoo'ul-Fataawaa (14/382).
6. Qaa'idah Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'ah fee Rahmati Ahlil-Bida' wal-Ma'aasee (p.5).



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